

NATIONAL CANNERS ASSOCIATION INFORMATION LETTER

PUBLICATION OR REPRODUCTION NOT PERMITTED

No. 455

Washington, D. C.

May 21, 1932

CROP PROSPECT REPORTS PROVE GREAT AID TO INDUSTRY

Issuance of three special crop prospect reports by the Bureau of Agricultural Economics, dealing with corn, peas and tomatoes for canning, has demonstrated the sound judgment of the canners in requesting the Bureau to undertake this work for the guidance of the industry.

These three reports, prepared by economists of the Bureau's staff especially familiar with canning crop problems, have placed in the hands of the canners just the information they need to plan their operations under present business conditions.

Mr. Nils A. Olsen, chief of the Bureau of Agricultural Economics, in his address at the Association's annual convention in January stressed the necessity of a planned output adjusted to market requirements, illustrated how the Bureau had assisted other agricultural industries in working out their production and marketing problems, and proffered the Bureau's service in the collection of the necessary data and in analyzing the situation for the canners. The Association immediately requested aid with respect to the corn, pea and tomato crops, and the Bureau began the collection of information.

To await the assembling of all the data desired would have prevented the Bureau from being immediately helpful, and the canners needed help this year more than ever before. The Bureau accordingly made an analysis for each of the three staple products, based upon such data as could be most readily obtained. Especially valuable for use in these special surveys is the information that has been regularly compiled by the Division of Crop and Livestock Estimates on intended acreage, planted and harvested acreage and production. Supplementing this information, and indispensable to the surveys, are the data of prices, sales and stocks furnished by canners and distributors at the Bureau's request.

The special reports have been issued in time to give the canners guidance for this year's operations. They have furnished information that will enable the individual canner to

keep his output in line with that of the industry, and with the trend of business conditions. They have demonstrated that, with more complete data and under normal economic conditions, the Bureau can provide a service by which the industry may avoid the demoralization resulting either from underproduction or overproduction.

Many canners who were skeptical of the proposed service are now convinced of its soundness. Its practicability depends upon the willingness of the individual canner to be guided by hard facts, and present business conditions make it unwise for canners to ignore the facts in the case.

DECREASE IN POULTRY USED FOR CANNING

The amount of poultry canned or used in canning in April was 15.26 per cent less than the quantity used in April, 1931, according to figures for 26 firms reporting to the U. S. Bureau of Agricultural Economics. The amount used in April, 1932, including both dressed poultry and drawn poultry converted to an undrawn basis, was 1,085,345 pounds, as compared with 1,280,710 pounds in April last year.

PRELIMINARY ESTIMATE OF CANNING PEA ACREAGE

Based upon reports received by the Department of Agriculture from firms which controlled 90 per cent of the total acreage of green peas grown for canning last year, the preliminary estimate of planted acreage for 1932 is 20.4 per cent below the estimate of planted acreage in 1931. A total planting of 205,450 acres is estimated for 1932, compared with 258,230 acres planted in 1931, of which 222,510 acres were harvested.

The loss between planted and harvested acreage in 1931 appears to have been nearly 14 per cent, due largely to unfavorable weather in Wisconsin and adjoining areas. In 1930, when growing conditions, as a whole, were more in line with the usual, the loss was about 4 per cent of the planted acreage. Should the general growing conditions in 1932 be similar to those of 1930, a 4 per cent loss in planted acreage might reasonably be expected. Based upon the planted acreage estimate of 205,450 acres, the 1932 harvested acreage would then be around 197,000 acres, or 11.5 per cent below the acreage harvested in 1931 and 9.3 per cent below the five-year average of 217,100 acres harvested during the period 1926 to 1930.

Reports received on varieties to be grown in 1932 indicate that, for the country as a whole, about 43 per cent will consist of Smooth Round varieties, and 57 per cent of the Sweet Wrinkled

varieties. In 1931, the indicated percentages were 47 per cent and 53 per cent, respectively.

State	1930		1931		1932 Preliminary Acreage	
	Planted Acres	Harvested Acres	Planted Acres	Harvested Acres	Per cent of 1931 planted	Acres
Maine	1,350	1,330	1,520	1,470	92	1,400
New York	35,230	34,440	33,000	31,900	83	27,400
New Jersey	800	600	550	500	91	500
Pennsylvania	2,120	2,010	1,950	1,920	80	1,560
Ohio	5,900	5,410	6,000	5,800	60	3,600
Indiana	6,270	6,270	6,000	5,950	90	5,400
Illinois	12,000	12,000	10,000	13,100	95	15,200
Michigan	11,000	11,000	13,800	10,200	91	12,500
Wisconsin	132,000	127,000	124,000	98,000	71	88,000
Minnesota	20,230	17,900	17,200	16,500	86	14,800
Delaware	3,850	3,200	2,620	2,620	67	1,750
Maryland	15,000	13,000	14,000	13,800	82	11,500
Montana	3,500	3,500	2,700	2,400	107	2,000
Colorado	4,000	3,700	3,830	3,500	84	3,220
Utah	13,070	13,070	7,400	7,200	100	7,400
Washington*	2,110	2,100	2,000	2,000	80	1,600
California	1,050	950	1,000	1,000	89	890
Other†	5,100	5,100	4,600	4,590	124	5,770
Total	275,900	263,900	258,230	222,510	79.6	205,450

* Included in "Other States" prior to 1929.

† Idaho, Iowa, Kansas, Tennessee, Virginia, and Wyoming.

‡ Revised.

The harvested acreage in 1928 was 205,960 acres and in 1929 it was 232,920 acres.

COLD STORAGE HOLDINGS OF FRUIT

The following table shows the holdings of fruit in cold storage reported to the Bureau of Agricultural Economics as of May 1, also a comparison with last year and with a five-year average:

	May 1 1932	May 1 1931	5-year average
Apples:			
Barrels	160,000	86,000	300,000
Boxes	3,393,000	3,083,000	2,711,000
Baskets	1,271,000	571,000	583,000
Pears:			
Boxes	100,000	220,000	116,000
Baskets	13,000	3,000	7,000
Frozen and preserved fruits (pounds)	72,192,000	56,740,000	41,295,000

WHOLESALE AND RETAIL PRICES IN APRIL

The index number of wholesale prices computed by the Bureau of Labor Statistics decreased from 66.0 for March to 65.5 in April, a decrease of approximately three-fourths of 1 per cent. When compared with April, 1931, with an index number of 74.8, a decrease of about 12½ per cent has been recorded. Price decreases were reported for evaporated milk and canned fruits.

Retail food prices in 51 cities of the United States showed an average decrease of about one and one-third per cent on April 15 when compared with March 15, and an average decrease of about 16 per cent since April 15, 1931. The price of canned corn decreased 3 per cent; that of canned red salmon, evaporated milk and canned tomatoes decreased 1 per cent. Canned peas showed no change in price during the month.

MINCED CLAM TARIFF INVESTIGATION ASKED

An application has been filed with the U. S. Tariff Commission for an investigation of the cost of production of minced razor clams, the object of the request being a decrease in the duty.

CALIFORNIA SPINACH PACK

Statistics on the 1932 spinach pack and the stocks as of March 1 have been compiled and issued by the Cannery League of California.

The 1932 pack amounted to 809,885 cases, as shown in the following table, which also furnishes comparative figures for the three preceding years:

	1929 <i>Cases</i>	1930 <i>Cases</i>	1931 <i>Cases</i>	1932 <i>Cases</i>
No. 2½	2,095,002	509,790	662,166	478,520
No. 10	843,452	289,761	194,468	63,824
No. 2 tall	861,744	394,986	301,061	184,436
No. 1 tall	255,396	175,064	81,078	53,318
3¼ in.—8 oz.	57,541	25,229	34,960	8,140
3 in.—8 oz.	31,680	28,297	22,735	4,785
Miscellaneous	48,927	55,300	43,223	16,862
Total	4,193,742	1,565,496	1,339,700	809,885

The carryover on March 1, sold and unsold, was 609,486 cases, and with the 1932 pack made a total of 1,419,371 cases to be moved during 1932-1933. Of the carryover on March 1, 479,785 cases were unsold stocks, and there accordingly remain to be sold in 1932-1933 a total of 1,289,670 cases.

TRUCK CROP SHIPMENTS

Snap bean shipments jumped to 800 cars during the week ended May 14th, of which Florida supplied more than half. Movement of carrots increased to 425 cars, chiefly California and Texas stock.

Green pea movement increased greatly to 320 cars, mostly from California and North Carolina. Green corn was becoming active in Texas and Florida, with heavier movement of cucumbers from those same states and Ohio.

Tomato shipments from Texas increased to 95 cars, while

Florida decreased to about 255. The season opened in southern California and a few cars moved from Imperial Valley. Total of 360 cars of domestic tomatoes was scarcely more than one-third as many as moved a year ago. Arrivals from Mexico decreased to around 500 cars.

Total forwardings of 31 fruits and vegetables the past week increased to 16,630 cars, but were still 4,200 cars lighter than last spring.

CARLOT SHIPMENTS

Commodity	May 8-14 1932	May 1-7 1932	May 10-16 1931	Total this sea- son thru May 14	Total last sea- son thru May 16	Total last season
Apples, total	685	827	485	99,591	108,303	100,794
Western states	529	631	407	45,903	65,247	60,538
Eastern states	156	196	78	53,688	43,056	43,256
Asparagus	188	283	107	3,921	3,467	3,866
Beans, snap and lima	799	424	492	7,339	4,836	9,344
Beets	57	48	62	906	1,240	1,703
Cabbage	656	606	809	11,035	15,744	37,841
Carrots:						
1932 season	417	360	333	5,699	7,164	11,471
1931 season	10	9	35	11,471	12,197	12,437
Cauliflower	140	100	38	9,574	9,583	9,611
Cherries	48	16	209	74	395	1,872
Corn, green	4	2	60	7	71	2,237
Cucumbers	163	18	474	392	1,252	6,480
Greens (except spinach)	22	30	17	2,928	1,007	1,659
Mixed vegetables:						
Domestic	702	677	605	13,307	15,501	28,558
Imports	4	5	9	150	203	300
Pears	19	35	36	20,048	28,763	28,528
Peas, green	320	189	220	2,925	2,494	7,186
Peppers:						
Domestic	67	81	62	1,820	1,651	2,818
Imports	11	23	6	214	362	360
Spinach	131	143	132	8,050	9,251	9,768
Tomatoes:						
Domestic	358	355	1,018	5,965	4,181	27,843
Imports	504	612	60	5,849	5,753	5,755
Turnips and Rutabagas:						
1932 season	0	2	0	144	426	1,330
1931 season—						
Domestic	3	3	0	1,330	1,640	1,668
Imports	5	8	0	1,373	374	914

CANNED SALMON STOCKS

Supplementing the statistics on stocks of canned foods in the hands of canners and distributors as published in the Information Letter for April 30, the Foodstuffs Division of the Bureau of Foreign and Domestic Commerce has issued the figures for canned salmon. Stocks of salmon, sold and unsold, in the hands of 35 canning establishments on April 1 amounted to 1,252,516 cases, as compared with 2,021,965 cases on January 1, a decrease of 769,449 cases or 38 per cent. Salmon stocks in the hands of 532 distributors on April 1 amounted to 459,311 cases,

as compared with 429,989 cases in the hands of the same distributors on January 1. This is an increase of 29,322 cases or 6.8 per cent.

BUSINESS INDICATORS

(Weeks ended Saturday; weekly average 1923-1925=100)

	1932			1931		1930	
	May 14	May 7	April 30	May 16	May 9	May 17	April 10
Composite Index:*							
New York Times		57.0	57.6	77.2	77.8	94.2	94.0
Business Week		57.3	56.3	79.6	79.8	98.3	96.9
Freight car loadings		55.7	57.8	78.0	↑77.8	97.0	97.2
Wholesale prices (Fisher's):							
All commodities	61.4	61.6	61.8	71.8	72.0	88.7	89.0
Agricultural products	43.4	43.7	44.2	61.6	61.9	93.4	94.4
Non-agricultural products	65.8	65.7	65.8	74.5	74.8	86.3	86.1
Bank debits outside N. Y. City	62.0	78.8	63.4	89.0	112.4	120.4	136.3
Bond prices	82.2	82.6	84.5	107.1	106.8	106.3	106.1
Stock prices	50.1	50.5	52.7	139.9	143.8	234.9	228.6
Interest rates:							
Call money	60.6	60.6	60.6	32.2	36.4	72.7	76.6
Time money	38.2	45.7	46.6	43.9	45.7	89.1	91.4
Business failures	162.7	147.7	164.6	126.8	155.3	127.0	129.0

* Relative to a computed normal taken as 100.

† Revised.

CAR LOADINGS

	Total	Miscellaneous	Merchandise L. C. L.	Other
Week ended May 7	533,677	196,190	185,104	152,383
Previous week	554,012	199,617	185,023	169,372
Corresponding week, 1931	745,740	290,939	226,227	219,574
Corresponding week, 1930	932,346	367,639	240,244	315,463

EMPLOYMENT IN APRIL

Employment in April decreased 2.7 per cent and earnings 5.1 per cent as compared with March, according to reports compiled by the U. S. Bureau of Labor Statistics from 60,252 establishments in 16 major industrial groups.

Increased employment was reported in 8 of these industrial groups. The most pronounced gain was shown in the canning and preserving group, in which a seasonal increase of 29.6 per cent in employment combined with an increase of 18.8 per cent in earnings, was reported.

GERMAN CANNED FOOD MARKET

The German market for American canned fruit and vegetables will be smaller during the current year, according to a review by the American vice consul at Hamburg. The present small outlet does not reflect a decline in the popularity of American canned foods, but is due to lower buying power, which limits purchases to the cheapest varieties of German packs; exchange restrictions, and the competition of German factories whose prices have fallen as much as American quotations, if not more.

Unsweetened pineapple, it is predicted, will be the only noteworthy import of American fruit, although orders will be smaller than in previous years. The increasing German asparagus pack and its improvement in quality have steadily diminished the market for American asparagus.

It is too early to forecast crop conditions. A great majority of the German canneries, owing to their debts, are under control of can manufacturers, who in turn are being maintained by the banks. The latter are not anxious to increase their commitments in this field, and it is prophesied that a majority of the canners will be forced to operate on a restricted basis during the coming season.

AUSTRIAN CANNED FOOD IMPORTS

Austrian imports of canned fruits in 1931 totaled 506,038 pounds valued at \$38,920, of which 364,100 pounds valued at \$27,300 came from the United States. Canned vegetable imports amounted to 1,564,179 pounds valued at \$101,780, and of these Italy supplied 1,149,827 pounds valued at \$67,760.

WEATHER CONDITIONS

The temperature for the week ended May 17, as a whole, averaged below normal from the Potomac and Ohio Rivers southward and in the west Gulf area, according to the U. S. Weather Bureau. In other portions of the country the temperatures were higher than usual for the season.

Rainfall was heavy in much of the middle Atlantic area and in many west Gulf localities, but elsewhere the weekly totals were mostly light. There was little or no rain in the Southeast from the lower Mississippi Valley eastward, and the interior of the Northeast was mostly dry. The Lake region and upper Mississippi Valley had moderate to heavy rains.

Except for some interruption in the more eastern states and Lake region, corn planting made good progress to the northern limits of the belt. Early-planted corn is showing satisfactory stands in most places, though rain is needed in Kentucky, southern Illinois, Missouri, and parts of Nebraska. In Iowa the week was mostly favorable and excellent progress in planting was reported, averaging now slightly more than half done, or about normal for the season.

PUBLICATIONS OF INTEREST TO CANNERS

Fertilizer Recommendations for Washington Soils.—Extension Bulletin No. 166, Washington State College, Pullman, Washington. Makes recommendations for fertilizer treatment for apple orchards, raspberries, blackberries, asparagus, spinach, and other fruit and truck crops. 16 pages.

The European Corn Borer in Western New York.—Bulletin No. 603, New York State Agricultural Experiment Station, Geneva. Gives the results of experiments and observations conducted from 1928 to 1931, and makes recommendations as to the most effective clean-up practices for corn borer control. 28 pages, illustrated.

Fertilizers for Cash crops.—Circular 243, College of Agriculture, Madison, Wisconsin. Gives general information on the various kinds of fertilizers, with specific recommendations as to fertilizers for canning peas, potatoes, sugar beets, cabbages, vegetables and onions. 40 pages, illustrated.

Tomato Varieties and Fertilizers for the Lower Rio Grande Valley of Texas.—Bulletin No. 438, Texas Agricultural Experiment Station, College Station. Gives the results of variety tests with tomatoes, pruning and spacing tests, and fertilizer experiments. An introductory chapter discusses methods of growing tomatoes in the lower Rio Grande Valley. 38 pages, illustrated, bibliography.

Asparagus Culture.—Bulletin 223, New York State College of Agriculture, Ithaca. Furnishes general information on growing of plants, transplanting, fertilizing and harvesting, with a brief discussion of diseases and insect pests. 24 pages, illustrated.

Asparagus Insects in Iowa.—Circular No. 134, Agricultural Experiment Station, Ames, Iowa. Describes the asparagus beetles, asparagus miner, and other asparagus insects, and makes recommendations as to control methods. 12 pages, illustrated.

Fertilizers for Vegetable Crops.—Bulletin 230, New York State College of Agriculture, Ithaca. Makes fertilizer recommendations for vegetable crops on upland soils and muck soils, respectively. 8 pages.

Tomato Diseases in Michigan.—Circular Bulletin No. 139, Michigan State College Experiment Station, East Lansing. Presents in condensed form information that the grower needs for the identification and control of tomato diseases common in Michigan. 24 pages, illustrated.

Growing Asparagus for the Canning Factory.—Extension Bulletin No. 90, Michigan State College, East Lansing. Furnishes general information on soils and soil types, propagation, planting, fertilizers, cultivation and harvesting. 4 pages.

CONTENTS

	Page		Page
Crop prospect reports prove great aid to industry	2973	California spinach pack	2976
Decrease in poultry used for canning	2974	Truck crop shipments	2976
Preliminary estimate of canning pea acreage	2974	Canned salmon stocks	2977
Cold storage holdings of fruit	2975	Business indicators	2978
Wholesale and retail prices in April	2975	Employment in April	2978
Mined clam tariff investigation asked	2976	German canned food market	2978
		Austrian canned food imports	2979
		Weather conditions	2979
		Publications of interest to canners	2979